

Are old silver dollars worth more as metal?

By Roger Boye

This week's column answers questions about old U. S. silver dollars.

Q—The word "trust" in "In God We Trust" is spelled "trvst" on my 1922 silver dollar. How much is this error worth? Also, why is "peace" on the coin?

K. J., Lincolnwood

A—The designer of so-called "peace dollars" used a "v" in "trust" as a throwback to ancient times (the letter "u" evolved from the Roman "v").

Uncle Sam issued the coins between 1921 and 1935 to celebrate the signing of treaties ending World War I.

Q—Are silver dollars worth more as collectibles or for their silver content?

H. N., Chicago

A—As collectibles. The govern-

ment put .77 of an ounce of silver in each dollar minted between 1840 and 1935, metal that currently sells for about \$4.50 on commodity markets.

Even the most common silver dollars—such as a worn 1921 "Morgan type" or the 1922 "peace"—retail for about \$10 each as keepsakes.

Q—I've got \$500 to invest in silver dollars. Would I be better off buying just one or two high priced coins with the money or about 30 of the \$15-per-coin dollars?

P. J., Aurora

A—Most studies indicate that silver dollars in uncirculated condition, especially the rarer dates, have done much better on the hobby market than the more common varieties that are worn from use.

But be certain the rare-date

coins you buy are accurately graded and free of blemishes.

Q—In the government's Carson City silver dollar sale several years ago, I bought two 1880 coins for \$75 each and two 1881s for \$70 each.

How much would a dealer pay for them? Should I keep the coins in the plastic holders even though they take up a lot of space?

W. T., Chicago

A—A Maryland dealer advertising in the March 29 Coin World offered to pay \$125 per 1880 Carson City dollar and \$150 per 1881—if the coins were in the original government holders.

Those prices represent a norm, but you should shop around for the best offer. Most dealers will pay a premium for coins still in the holders.